



## **A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby**

801 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, Suite 460 • Washington, DC 20003-2167 • 202-547-5556 • FAX 202-547-5510  
E-MAIL [network@networklobby.org](mailto:network@networklobby.org) • WEB SITE [www.networklobby.org](http://www.networklobby.org)

July 25, 2001

The Honorable John Dingell  
House Energy & Commerce Committee  
Washington DC 20515

Dear Representative Dingell,

NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby, educates, lobbies and organizes for just federal policies. Founded in 1971 by 47 Catholic sisters, NETWORK is supported by more than 11,000 groups and individuals committed to working for social and economic justice.

NETWORK believes that universal access to affordable, quality health care is a fundamental human right. As a step toward that goal, NETWORK supports the Family Care Act of 2001.

Since 1997 NETWORK has been engaged in a multi-year study of poverty and the effects of welfare reform legislation. We have surveyed thousands of people who have been forced to turn to private social service facilities to meet some of their most basic needs – health care included. One of our most discouraging findings is that large numbers of people, including working families, report that they are unable to secure medical care for themselves and their children. This is unconscionable, especially during a period of unparalleled economic prosperity.

NETWORK applauds your efforts to begin to address this problem through the Family Care Act of 2001. Your legislation will make available new federal funds so that states can provide health insurance coverage to parents of children enrolled in CHIP and Medicaid. It also gives states more options to expand coverage to uninsured children and pregnant women, simplifies the application process, and supports outreach activities so that more families can receive health care assistance.

NETWORK fully supports the Family Care Act of 2001 and will work hard to see that it is passed.

Sincerely,

Kathy Thornton, RSM  
NETWORK National Coordinator